

NIDDK PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS

The FY 2001 initiative concepts presented in this document are just one component of a multifaceted NIDDK program planning process, through which the NIDDK seeks to enhance its program development--in consultation with its respective scientific and lay communities. Presented annually to the NIDDK National Advisory Council, these concepts include plans to issue various research solicitations to stimulate scientific inquiry or capitalize on impressive research findings, as well as plans for conferences and workshops, and for expansions and extensions of ongoing program activity. Thus, the present document is only a partial presentation of the many research efforts of the NIDDK. It complements an extensive and highly productive portfolio of ongoing NIDDK initiatives, such as major clinical trials--and robust fundamental research portfolios that are largely fueled by investigator-initiated research grants.

This year, the NIDDK has modified its program planning process in several major ways:

- NIDDK scientific leaders are obtaining input from their constituency groups and the Institute's National Advisory Council earlier in the year.

- NIDDK is giving greater emphasis to:

Science-driven program initiatives in which two or more divisions pursue shared research interests and goals;

Initiatives that dovetail productively with trans-NIH and trans-Departmental planning processes and funding emphases;

Projects that are conducive to collaborative partnerships with other agencies, the private sector, and professional and voluntary health organizations.

Initiatives that take advantage of emerging technologies, bioinformatics resources, research networks, consortia, and other means of facilitating the scientific enterprise.

- NIDDK is pursuing a more multifaceted approach for developing initiatives, including:

Short-Term Implementation Planning: In a departure from previous years, the compilation of initiative concepts presented in this document focuses mainly on initiatives considered ready for implementation in the upcoming fiscal year, provided that funding is available. While one or two of the planned initiatives may take longer to develop, most of the concepts are ready to implement in FY 2001. Thus, this document is much briefer and more realistic than in past years.

Longer-Term Strategic Planning: NIDDK is strengthening its long-range planning via:

Strategic Planning Groups: The Institute has established three trans-NIDDK working groups on the following topics: (1) Genetics, Genomics and Bioinformatics; (2) Stem Cells and Developmental Biology; and (3) Disease Prevention and Management. Each group consists of Council members, other scientists external to the NIH, and NIDDK administrative leaders. These groups will provide advice and recommendations to the Institute with respect to the formulation of long-term initiatives to capitalize on scientific opportunities and emerging technologies, as well as to meet pressing public health needs.

NIDDK Strategic Plan: Developed in the summer of 1999, the NIDDK Strategic Plan addresses cross-cutting themes that unite the Institute's programs: genetics, cell biology, clinical research, and infrastructure. Panels of eminent scientists and lay leaders assisted the NIDDK in formulating this plan, which can be accessed on the World Wide Web at:

<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/federal/NIDDKstratplan.htm>

NIDDK Strategic Plan on Health Disparities: Developed in the spring of 2000, this plan is part of an NIH-wide effort. It contains initiatives the Institute intends to pursue in order to address the disproportionately heavy burden that many of the diseases within the NIDDK mission place on racial and ethnic minority groups. It also contains initiatives intended to build related institutional and individual research capacity, through research training and manpower development programs, and to develop culturally sensitive health information and education programs tailored to racial and ethnic minority groups. This strategic plan is also available for comment on the World Wide Web at:

<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/federal/strategicplan.htm>

Disease-Specific Strategic Plans: A critically important part of the multi-dimensional NIDDK program planning process is the development of research strategies that are specific to the disease programs and operating divisions of the Institute. For example, the NIDDK has participated in the development of renal and liver disease research plans in close consultation with professional and lay leaders in those fields. The NIDDK also integrates into its program planning process recommendations and advice from disease-targeted plans that are developed independently by external groups and organizations. For example, the congressionally established Diabetes Research Working Group developed a strategic plan for diabetes research. This plan contains a wide range of scientific recommendations that are proving extremely helpful to the Institute in framing new diabetes initiatives.

Thus, the present compilation of planned initiative concepts for likely implementation in FY 2001 is just one component of a much larger trans-NIDDK and program-specific process, which includes planning for clinical trials; longer-term cross-cutting and disease-targeted planning for FY 2002 and several fiscal years beyond; and a global strategic vision for future research directions. Taken collectively, the several components of the NIDDK program planning process enable the NIDDK to work closely with the communities it serves to: assess the state of its science base; identify areas of research need and opportunity; and develop strategies and initiatives to encourage scientists to pursue research avenues that will benefit the health and well-being of all Americans.